

displacing the table top towards a middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table during the tilting of the table top.

In contrast, Zachrisson discloses a surgical table that can be transversely displaced while the table is in a tilted position. The table can be translated by a lateral floating means (6), p. 8, ll. 3-10, and can be tilted by means of a tilting mechanism (4) having several links (7) and hydraulic cylinders (8) that are arranged such that the table tilts about an axis, A, that is located above the table top, p. 9, ll. 15-20. However, Zachrisson does not disclose or suggest a control device or any means that automatically activates a transverse displacement of the table top in a direction towards the middle position during a tilting movement, and Zachrisson does not disclose or suggest any automatic displacement of the table top towards a middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table during tilting of the table top. The passage of Zachrisson cited by the Examiner as allegedly disclosing such a control device (i.e., p. 13, ll. 8-15) merely states that the tilt and the float of the table can be "program controlled." However, Zachrisson does not disclose or suggest that the tilt and float of the table are controlled to automatically activate a transverse displacement of the table top in a direction towards the middle position during a tilting movement. Thus, Zachrisson does not disclose or suggest a control device or any means that automatically activates a transverse displacement of the table top in a direction towards the middle position during a tilting movement, as recited in claims 1 and 8, respectively. Furthermore, Zachrisson does not disclose or suggest automatically displacing the table top towards a middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table during the tilting of the table top, as recited in claim 11.

Indeed, Zachrisson teaches away from coordinated tilting and translation of the table. Zachrisson teaches that an object of the invention is to provide a surgical table that ensures that a lateral movement of the table is not affected by a lateral tilt of the table. See p. 2, ll. 1-3 and p. 3, ll. 4 – 17. As explained above, Zachrisson's invention accomplishes a lateral tilt of the table without causing lateral movement of the table with use of a tilting mechanism (4) of links (7) that is independent of the lateral floating means (6). See also Claim 1 (stating that the lateral floating means (6) is positioned below the lateral tilting mechanism (4) to permit undisturbed

lateral movement of the table). In sum, Zachrisson fails to disclose a surgical table in which displacement and tilting of the table are coordinated, such that the table top is automatically displaced towards a middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table during tilting of the table top.

For at least these reasons, applicants request withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of claims 1, 8, and 11. Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the reasons that claim 1 is allowable. Claims 9-10 depend from claim 8 and are allowable for at least the reasons that claim 8 is allowable, and claims 12-13 depend from claim 11 and are allowable for at least the reasons that claim 11 is allowable

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

Dependent claims 5-7 and 14-17 have been rejected as allegedly obvious over Zachrisson in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,574,808 ("Brown"). Applicants request withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of the claims because Brown fails to remedy the deficiencies of Zachrisson. In particular, Brown does not describe or even suggest automatic displacement of a surgical table top towards a middle position transversely to the longitudinal axis of the table during tilting of the table top or a control device or means for causing such a coordinated automatic displacement and tilting motion. Brown relates to an imaging table leveling system in which a inclinometer (120) measures a tilt angle of the imaging table and a processing unit causes the angle of the table to be adjusted based on a comparison of the tilt angle with a stored value. Col. 3:5-17. However, Brown does not describe or suggest automatically displacing the table top during tiling of the table top.

For at least these reasons, applicants request withdrawal of the obviousness rejection and allowance of claims 5-7 and 14-17.

Applicant : Ulrich Doering et al.
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CONCLUSION

Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all pending rejections and allow claims 1-17. No fees are believed to be due at this time. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 15540-016001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

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Mark R.W. Bellermann
Reg. No. 47,419

Fish & Richardson P.C.
1425 K Street, N.W.
11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3500
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (202) 783-2331